

PEDLAR RIVER

Boundary Description

Pedlar River in Amherst County from where FR 39 crosses the river upstream to the first crossing with the national forest property boundary for a total distance of approximately 6.5 miles.

Observations

On November 7, 2002, David C. Whitehurst as required by DEQ Exceptional Waters guidance conducted a site visit to the nominated segment of Pedlar River in Amherst County. When compared to other nominees for Exceptional Waters status that have been observed, the Pedlar River is one of the larger in terms of volume. It is a sinuous river with quite a bit of meander and its gradient



may be considered medium to medium/high in the upper reaches of the nominated segment. The substrate is dominated by cobble in most portions observed with some gravel and sand. There are the occasional boulders and bedrock dominates in areas of sharp drops in elevation. A notable feature as well as popular goal for hikers is Panther Falls. While not as dramatic as the Cascades on Little Stony Creek in Giles County, Panther Falls occurs over three sharp drops in elevation each with a plunge pool below.

Pedlar River is designated a Class iii wild natural trout stream by the Department of Game and Inland Fisheries (DGIF) but no brook trout were observed. However, several stocked rainbow trout were observed. The river is managed for much of its length as a stocked trout fishery though much of the upper reaches are managed as delayed harvest waters which results in a number of holdover trout which provides excellent opportunities for the recreational angler. A cursory benthic survey was done at several points and numerous individuals of the families ephemeroptera (mayflies), plecoptera (stoneflies), and trichoptera (caddisflies) were

seen as were crayfish and, occasionally, snails. Numerous unidentified individuals of the cyprinid family were also observed.



An easily identifiable yet unimproved trail parallels the nominated segment that provides for outstanding hiking, backpacking, and primitive camping opportunities in an aesthetically pleasing environment. There are also good opportunities for bird- and wildlife watching or photography.

Conclusions

After considering observations made during a visit to the site, staff has concluded that Pedlar River has an exceptional environmental setting and provides for outstanding recreational opportunities thus meeting two of the three eligibility criteria necessary for consideration as Exceptional Waters.

